

Description of Programs

Fiscal Year 2020

MISSION STATEMENT

The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) works to increase immunization rates and prevent disease by creating and distributing educational materials for healthcare professionals and the public that enhance the delivery of safe and effective immunization services. IAC also facilitates communication about the safety, efficacy, and use of vaccines within the broad immunization community of patients, parents, healthcare organizations, and government health agencies.

For more than two decades, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has worked in concert with and provided financial support to IAC for the purpose of educating healthcare professionals about U.S. vaccine recommendations. CDC first recognized IAC's accomplishments in 1997 by awarding it the prestigious Partners in Public Health Award "for efforts instrumental in achieving high levels of routine infant hepatitis B immunization."

Physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals at every level of the immunization community, including both the public and private sectors, rely on many of the following projects in their daily work to increase immunization rates across the lifespan.

Education

IAC creates publications and educational materials for healthcare professional staff, their patients, and the public. All of these publications and materials are available online and copyright-free.

■ IAC Express

Currently emailed free of charge to nearly 52,000 opt-in subscribers every Wednesday, *IAC Express* provides up-to-date information about new and updated CDC/ACIP vaccine recommendations, new FDA licensures, newly released Vaccine Information Statements and translations, new immunization education materials, current events in the vaccine world, continuing education opportunities, and journal articles. Special editions of *IAC Express* are also published when there are urgent matters to be reported. During fiscal year 2020, ending June 30, 2020 (FY2020), IAC published 70 issues of *IAC Express*, which included a total of 905 articles on topics related to vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases. The current issue, as well as the more than 1,500 issues published since *IAC Express's* beginning in 1997, is available online at www.immunize.org/express.

■ Ask the Experts

Ask the Experts (ATE) is a recurring feature of *IAC Express*, in which IAC experts answer challenging and timely questions about vaccines and their use. Questions are gathered from IAC's close communications with clinicians who provide immunization services as well as from IAC and CDC staff who closely monitor the latest changes to vaccine recommendations. More than 1,100 ATE questions and answers are available and searchable in the *Ask the Experts* web section available online at www.immunize.org/askexperts.

■ Unprotected People Stories

Since 1998, IAC has collected and published personal stories and case reports about people who have suffered or died from vaccine-preventable diseases. We believe that our collection called *Unprotected People Stories* is extremely important in helping parents and the media understand the value of vaccines. These stories can be particularly effective in countering stories claiming harm from vaccines. Currently, 109 reports are available online at www.immunize.org/stories.

■ Educational Materials for Healthcare Professionals, Their Patients, and the Public

IAC is the most relied-upon source of free immunization materials for healthcare professionals, their patients, and the public. During FY2020, 3.5 million copies of IAC's 329 educational pieces (including translations) were downloaded from IAC's "Handouts" web section. All of IAC's educational materials are available online free of charge and ready to copy at www.immunize.org/handouts.

IAC believes it is very important to provide information for non-English speaking patients and the public. We currently provide Spanish translations of 50 of our patient/parent handouts. Many of these patient/parent handouts are also translated into seven additional languages.

■ Translations of Vaccine Information Statements (VISs)

For two decades, IAC has maintained an online index of the federally mandated VISs, for which hundreds of translations are available. The index can be viewed at www.immunize.org/vis and can be sorted alphabetically or by vaccine or language. Visitors can also find tips on how to use VISs, news about VISs, and links to related CDC resources.

In October 2016, IAC entered into a five-year cooperative agreement with CDC to continue to support IAC's role as the official clearinghouse for VIS translations. As a result of the federal funding, IAC provides translations in a minimum of nine languages within 30 days of CDC's release of a new or updated VIS for a routinely recommended vaccine. The languages provided within the current grant year are Arabic, Burmese, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish, Somali, and Vietnamese. In addition, IAC posts Spanish VIS translations online in both PDF and RTF versions. RTF versions enable electronic records systems (that cannot utilize PDFs) to provide Spanish translations within their systems. The IAC staff coordinates nationally with numerous donors and volunteers who generously provide translations of VISs in additional languages. During FY2020, IAC posted 94 new or revised VIS translations on its website at www.immunize.org/vis.

■ Additional Immunization Resources

This online list of resources highlights email news services, apps, package inserts, PowerPoint slide sets, contact information for vaccine manufacturers, and immunization partner organizations. This information is online at www.immunize.org/resources.

■ *Immunization Techniques: Best Practices with Infants, Children, and Adults* DVD

In 2001, IAC collaborated with the California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch, in developing this DVD (formerly titled *Immunization Techniques: Safe, Effective, Caring*). In 2010, the California Department of Public Health updated this award-winning training DVD that teaches best practices for administering intramuscular and subcutaneous vaccines to infants, children, and adults. It is designed for use as a hands-on instructional program for new staff, as well as a refresher course for those who are experienced in vaccine administration. IAC is the exclusive distributor of this DVD outside the state of California. The DVD can be ordered online at www.immunize.org/dvd.

■ Personal Immunization Record Cards

In collaboration with CDC, and with input from several state health departments, IAC has created three versions of a personal hand-held immunization record card for recording vaccination histories. Versions are available for children, adults, and across-the-lifespan use. To date, more than 12.5 million immunization record cards have been distributed, including 9.6 million adult, 1.2 million child/teen, and 1.6 million lifetime record cards. Record cards can be ordered online at www.immunize.org/recordcards.

■ Laminated Immunization Schedules

In March 2006, IAC began producing laminated versions of CDC's recommended immunization schedules (for children/adolescents and for adults) to be used in medical practices. IAC has distributed more than 400,000 laminated immunization schedules since 2006. Laminated schedules can be ordered online at www.immunize.org/schedules.

■ Flu Vaccine Buttons and Stickers

In June 2019, IAC introduced two new promotional items: flu vaccine buttons and flu vaccine stickers. The buttons and stickers are available on our website at www.immunize.org/shop. The purpose of these promotional items is to increase awareness among clinic staff and patients of the importance of influenza vaccination. IAC has distributed more than 50,000 flu vaccine buttons for healthcare professionals to wear and 200,000 flu vaccine stickers for patients.

■ "Vaccines Save Lives" Pins

In August 2019, IAC launched its "Vaccines Save Lives" black enamel pin with gold lettering that can be worn as jewelry on uniforms or other clothing to promote the message that vaccination is important. IAC has distributed more than 6,000 pins to date.

■ Website for Healthcare Professionals: www.immunize.org

Launched in 1995 as one of the first websites devoted to immunization, www.immunize.org is the largest resource of practical, user-friendly immunization information available today, serving an average of more than 26,000 visitors per day in FY2020.

The website makes available more than 1,500 web pages and 1,400 PDF files dedicated to educating healthcare professionals and the public about vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases. Currently, the site ranks number one in Google when searching on the word "immunize."

This website houses the complete collection of IAC's publications and educational materials, all of which are available free of charge. Users are encouraged to copy and distribute them. The collection includes all VISs published in the United States in dozens of languages. During FY2020, users downloaded 7 million ready-to-copy PDF documents from this website, including approximately 3.5 million VISs and their translations and 3.5 million copies of IAC-created educational materials.

Other noteworthy sections of the website include *Ask the Experts*, ACIP Recommendations, Package Inserts, Vaccines,

Clinic Tools, State Vaccination Laws, Image Library (of vaccine-preventable diseases), and Video of the Week.

■ **Website for the Public, Vaccine Information You Need: www.vaccineinformation.org**

Developed in consultation with CDC, this website for the general public presents straightforward information about vaccine-preventable diseases and their vaccines. Launched in August 2002, it currently hosts an average of 3,500 visits per day. Consisting of 230 pages, this website provides basic information about vaccination, vaccine safety, and the overall importance of immunization. It features 196 vaccine-preventable disease photos and 172 video clips.

Major sections include Infants/Children, Preteens, Teens, Adults, Vaccine Basics, and Diseases. The website offers parents and people of all ages timely, accurate, and proven information about vaccines and the diseases they prevent. The site also features hundreds of valuable resources, including personal testimonies of suffering and loss due to vaccine-preventable diseases; vaccine-related videos; public service announcements; and educational materials from trusted organizations.

■ **Website for Immunization Coalitions: www.immunizationcoalitions.org**

This website provides access to an interactive online database of local, state, regional, and national immunization coalitions. The database allows interested healthcare professionals, parents, immunization advocates, and others to contact immunization coalitions for resources, ideas, or volunteer opportunities. Currently, 137 immunization coalitions have entered information about their organizational structures and activities.

■ **Repository of Resources for Maintaining Immunization during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

In May 2020, IAC launched the Repository of Resources for Maintaining Immunization during the COVID-19 Pandemic to provide a rich collection of resources to healthcare professionals and others to help them in their routine vaccination efforts during the pandemic. The repository includes links to both national and state-level policies and guidance; advocacy materials, including talking points, webinars, press releases, articles, and social media posts; and telehealth resources. These resources are intended to support the immunization efforts of healthcare settings, state and local health departments, professional societies, immunization coalitions, and advocacy organizations.

■ **Vaccinating Adults: A Step-by-Step Guide (Guide)**

This 142-page *Guide* was released in November 2018 and provides practical information in an easy-to-use format to help practitioners implement or enhance adult immunization services in their healthcare settings. The *Guide* also includes an abundance of web addresses and references to assist in staying up to date with the most current information. Developed by staff at the Immunization Action Coalition, the *Guide* had several early reviews for technical accuracy by subject matter experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Vaccine Program Office, both of which provided financial support. A PDF version of the *Guide* can be downloaded for free at www.immunize.org/guide.

■ **Technically Speaking**

Technically Speaking is a monthly column written by IAC Executive Director Dr. Deborah L. Wexler. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Vaccine Education Center (VEC) features the column in its monthly e-newsletter for healthcare professionals. *Technically Speaking* columns cover practical topics in immunization delivery such as needle length, vaccine administration, storage and handling, and immunization schedules. Current and archived issues back to September 2010 are available online at www.immunize.org/technically-speaking.

Partnering for Immunization

IAC is broadly and deeply connected to every level of the U.S. immunization community. We serve as an independent communications hub through our publications, websites, email news services, conference organizing and participation, contributions to policymaking, and as a direct contact with every vaccine-involved federal agency, state health department, professional medical association, and vaccine manufacturer. Virtually all of America's professional medical societies partner with IAC as members of our Advisory Board. A list of these societies is available online at www.immunize.org/aboutus/advisoryboard.asp.

■ **National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit (NAIIS)**

A partnership of CDC, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy, and IAC, NAIIS comprises more than 130 organizations including nearly 700 individuals. NAIIS maintains three workgroups that take specific actions aimed at improving vaccine uptake. Since 2003, IAC has been the leading

member of NAIIS, continuing to serve as the NAIIS fiscal agent and managing its website at www.izsummitpartners.org. NAIIS is led by IAC Chief Strategy Officer Dr. L.J. Tan.

■ National Network of Immunization Coalitions

IAC founded the National Network of Immunization Coalitions in 2012. IAC manages the group's communications and deliberations, including an email listserv, newsletters, and website. IAC also conducts monthly teleconference calls of the coalition directors and arranges speakers for quarterly webinars attended by an average of more than 100 participants. Currently, the network comprises more than 600 immunization advocates, including representatives from 137 immunization-related coalitions and nonprofit leaders. IAC has served on the planning committee for the biennial National Conference for Immunization Coalitions and Partnerships since the conference began in 1998.

■ Immunization Policy and Conferences

IAC is deeply involved in state and national vaccine policy-making. Some examples:

- ▶ For more than a decade, Dr. Wexler, Dr. Tan, IAC medical consultant Dr. William L. Atkinson, and IAC Associate Director for Immunization Projects Ms. Diane Peterson have filled important consulting positions on many Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Working Groups, including Childhood Immunization Schedule, Adult Immunization Schedule, General Principles of Vaccination, Combination Vaccines, Influenza, Herpes Zoster, Evidence-Based, Pneumococcal, Hepatitis, Pertussis, and Meningococcal-Hib. Dr. Kelly Moore, IAC Associate Director for Immunization Education, and Dr. Carolyn Bridges, IAC Associate Director for Adult Immunization, have recently been added to IAC's team of consultants participating in ACIP Working Groups.
- ▶ Dr. Tan is a former voting member of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) and has served as chair of its Immunization Infrastructure Working Group, as well as serving on the Vaccine Safety, Maternal Immunization, Adult Immunization, Health Care Personnel, and Vaccine Confidence Working Groups.
- ▶ IAC staff members attend or give presentations at CDC's National Immunization Conference, the Immunization Program Managers Conference, and meetings of NVAC and ACIP, as well as at many state immunization conferences. During FY2020, IAC staff attended six state or national and two international conferences, reflecting a reduction in face-to-face meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ▶ Dr. Wexler and Dr. Tan are members of the 317 Coalition Steering Committee, which advocates for increased federal funding for those who are uninsured or underinsured, as well as for increased financial support for the infrastructure of immunization programs in public health departments.
- ▶ Dr. Wexler, Dr. Tan, IAC Associate Director for Research Dr. Sharon Humiston, IAC Coordinator for Public Health Ms. Laurel Wood, and Ms. Peterson participate in several monthly conference calls hosted by IAC national partners and attended by organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Physicians, and the American Pharmacists Association. These calls address a wide range of current federal and state immunization policy issues.
- ▶ IAC is a member of the Immunization Alliance, an American Academy of Pediatrics initiative formed to address parental hesitancy about immunizing children.
- ▶ IAC is a member of the American Immunization Registry Association, with Dr. Wexler, Dr. Tan, and Ms. Wood serving as primary contacts.
- ▶ Ms. Peterson leads the national effort to track state anti-vaccination legislation, as well as other legislation that would be detrimental to state immunization programs. This effort includes providing educational materials and resources for state and national partners as well as state legislators. In addition, IAC maintains lists of local and state immunization champions who can be contacted to help educate legislators.
- ▶ Ms. Peterson has served as the IAC legislative liaison to the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society's Vaccine Advocacy Task Force.
- ▶ Ms. Peterson serves on the Minnesota Immunization Practices Advisory Committee, which advises the Minnesota Department of Health's Immunization Program.
- ▶ Ms. Wood is the IAC liaison to the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM), the organization which represents the 64 federally funded state, territorial, and city immunization programs.
- ▶ Dr. Tan and Ms. Peterson give presentations on vaccine policy at state immunization conferences, explaining how vaccine policy is made at the state and national levels and how people can get involved at the local level.

- ▶ Dr. Tan provides consultation internationally to the European Scientific Working Group of the EU Influenza Summit and to the Asian Pacific Alliance for the Control of Influenza and gives presentations nationally and internationally on immunization policymaking and advocacy.
- ▶ Ms. Wood serves on the International Vaccine Stability Working Group, which is tasked with aligning vaccine storage and handling policies with recommendations based on science and expertise derived from organizations around the world.
- ▶ Dr. Tan has served on the steering committee of the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable, established by the American Cancer Society (ACS) and CDC in 2014. This is a national coalition of public organizations, private organizations, voluntary organizations, and invited individuals dedicated to reducing the incidence of and mortality from HPV-associated cancer in the United States. IAC is a member organization.
- ▶ Dr. Tan served on the National Quality Forum's Adult Immunization Expert Committee.
- ▶ Dr. Tan served on the Pharmacy Quality Alliance's Adult Immunization Working Group.
- ▶ Dr. Tan serves on the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Vaccine Study Group.
- ▶ Dr. Tan served as an advisor to AMGA's Adult immunization Collaborative and currently serves on the advisory committee for AMGA's National Adult Immunization Campaign, launching in 2021.
- ▶ Dr. Tan serves as an editor for the following publications: *Journal for Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, *BMC Infectious Diseases*, and *Medscape Infectious Diseases*.
- ▶ Dr. Tan has previously served as an elected member of the federal National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC).
- ▶ Dr. Tan co-chaired the Adult Vaccine Access Coalition (AVAC). AVAC's goal is to make necessary policy changes at the national level to increase adult vaccination rates. He currently serves on its scientific advisory board.

■ Hepatitis B Vaccine Birth Dose Project

For nearly three decades, IAC has helped lead the national effort to ensure that every newborn receives a birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine prior to discharge from the newborn nursery. We have completed a guidebook for implementing birth dose policies titled *Hepatitis B: What Hospitals Need to Do to Protect Newborns* and launched a national campaign in 2013 urging birthing institutions to adopt hepatitis

B vaccine birth dose policies. As part of this initiative, IAC has developed the Hepatitis B Vaccine Birth Dose Honor Roll. To be included in the honor roll, a birthing institution must have: (1) reported a coverage rate of 90% or greater over a 12-month period for administering hepatitis B vaccine before hospital discharge to all newborns, including those whose parents refuse vaccination, and (2) implemented specific written policies, procedures, and protocols to protect all newborns from hepatitis B virus infection by vaccinating within 24 hours of birth. Honorees are listed on IAC's website, awarded a certificate, and featured in *IAC Express*. Currently, the honor roll includes more than 500 birthing institutions, all of which are listed online at www.immunize.org/honor-roll/birthdose/honorees.asp. IAC also has developed a related slide set titled "Give Birth to the End of Hep B: What Hospitals Need to Do to Protect Newborns," available in PDF or PowerPoint format at www.immunize.org/resources/res_powerpoint.asp.

■ Honor Roll for Mandatory Influenza Vaccination for Healthcare Personnel

In 2009, IAC created the Honor Roll for Mandatory Influenza Vaccination for Healthcare Personnel, which recognizes healthcare settings that have implemented mandatory influenza vaccination policies for their healthcare staff. To date, more than 1,100 healthcare settings have been honored. The honorees are listed at www.immunize.org/honor-roll/influenza-mandates.

■ Voices for Vaccines

After conceiving the idea for a membership organization of parents dedicated to promoting the value of immunization, Dr. Wexler co-founded Voices for Vaccines (VFV) with Dr. Stanley Plotkin and Dr. Paul Offit, all of whom serve on its executive committee. Parent-led and national in scope, VFV has become a major vaccination advocacy organization especially on social media and the Internet.

■ IAC Information and Customer Service

IAC makes a tremendous effort to answer email and phone inquiries from healthcare professionals and the public in a timely manner. Staff members respond to more than 500 email messages and phone calls each month.

■ IAC in the Media

IAC staff members are often called on to provide accurate information to print, radio, television, and internet news media. Some recent contacts with media include *American Academy of Family Physicians News*, *American Medical Asso-*

ciation COVID-19 Update, *Becker's Hospital Review*, CNN, Fox News, National Public Radio, *The New York Times*, *Pharmacy Times*, *SELF Magazine*, *The Telegraph*, *USA Today*, *The Washington Times*, *The Washington Post*, Web MD, and *YAHOO News*.

When vaccines are portrayed inaccurately in the entertainment or news media, IAC often responds with authoritative information about the issue and a reminder about the positive and negative power of the media on American attitudes and beliefs.

■ Closing the Meningococcal ACWY Booster Vaccination Gap

In collaboration with Sanofi Pasteur, our website at www.Give2MenACWY.org aims to raise awareness of the low immunization rates for the meningococcal (MenACWY) booster dose at age 16, help healthcare providers know their second-dose MenACWY coverage rates, and supply tools for providers to increase rates and help close the MenACWY booster dose gap for their adolescent patients.

As part of this collaboration, Dr. Humiston presented two webinars highlighting the importance of adolescent vaccination. The most recent webinar is archived on www.immunize.org/resources/res_powerpoint.asp.

■ Meningococcal B Vaccination Honor Roll

In May 2020, IAC launched the IAC Meningococcal B Vaccination Honor Roll to recognize colleges and universities that have taken the lead in establishing policies requiring or recommending MenB vaccination to protect their students and to prevent disease outbreaks. To date, there are 264 institutions in 36 states listed, including 40 that require MenB vaccination. Honorees are listed at www.immunize.org/honor-roll/menb.

■ 65+FluDefense™

Our collaboration with Seqirus aims to promote the importance of influenza vaccination for people age 65 years and older. The website at www.influenza-defense.org features talking points, best practices, and helpful tips to guide healthcare providers through conversations around influenza vaccination with their older patients. It also addresses patient hesitancy around vaccination.

■ PBS Documentary about the History of IAC

Visionaries, Inc. is a producer of documentaries highlighting the rarely told stories of nonprofit organizations that are working to make positive differences in their communities and beyond. As part its 24th season on PBS, Visionaries selected the Immunization Action Coalition to be one of twelve featured stories offered to public television stations during 2020–21.

Filming was done over five days in Saint Paul, Minnesota, during February 2020. The documentary, *Protecting Health: Saving Lives*, includes footage from filming in 1995 when Dr. Wexler was forming and developing IAC as a premier provider of immunization education materials to the nation's healthcare providers.

The film interweaves the story of Dr. Wexler's personal commitment to spreading the benefits of vaccination with a great deal of information on vaccines and their delivery, including the challenges presented by anti-vaccination messaging. The viewer is taken on a ride through IAC's history that begins with the nation's 1989–90 measles epidemic to its current work being carried out by an extraordinary staff of national experts. The documentary may be viewed online at www.immunize.org/aboutus/iac-film-history.asp.